

REVIEWS.

THE TRUTH ABOUT
VIVISECTION.

By SIR LEONARD ROGERS, K.C.S.I., LL.D.,
M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., F.R.S. J. &
A. Churchill Ltd., London. 1937. Price
5/-.

A witness before the Royal Commission on Vivisection stated that she thought animal experiments even if painless were immoral and "*consequently* will never result in a scientific advance." The italicised word gives the key to the anti-vivisectionist mentality. It is not confined to them; formerly it was commoner in politics and theology than it is to-day. A premiss is adopted generally for emotional reasons, and any facts inconsistent with it must be brushed aside or stoutly denied. It is a mental attitude which has serious effects on the reasoning powers of the believer, but there can be no appreciation of the anti-vivisectionists' position unless it is realised. It converts people initially kind-hearted and well-meaning into savage controversialists who make, and persist in making against demonstrated fact, the most libellous statements. Thus the Rev. J. Page Hopps spoke of animals being horribly tortured, and of scientists "reveling in this disgusting work, the artificially produced agony in a dog." He was told by a Commissioner, "I am afraid that you did not realise your responsibility. You have made a very serious charge . . . without being able to produce evidence." Miss Lind-af-Hageby accused scientists of "exercising the black art of producing the utmost agony, while the gateways through which death could enter are carefully watched." She alleged two instances in support of this and the Commission found that "it is obvious that this statement was founded on a misapprehension on the part of Miss Hageby."

Indeed the unanimous findings of the Commission on all the charges of cruelty were—"after careful consideration of the above cases we have come to the conclusion that the witnesses have either misapprehended or inaccurately described the facts of the experiments." That was in 1912, yet the same charges have been repeated ever since, by word of mouth, by written articles

and by posters. There can only be two explanations of this, either wilful misrepresentation or mental blindness evoked by emotion. We trust the more charitable interpretation is correct.

To what extremes the ethical objection may be pressed was shown by the evidence of the Rev. L. S. Lewis, who said: "I would not have one mouse painfully vivisected to save the greatest of human beings nor the life dearest to me." Replying to the question, "Do you think you are justified to save the life of a helpless child [suffering from diphtheria] in using antitoxin or not?" he said, "I would not allow my own child to have antitoxin administered to it to save its life." Asked if he would let the child die, he said "I should."

The Founder of the religion of which Mr. Lewis is a minister said, 'Ye are of more value than many sparrows,' but Mr. Lewis seems to think that one mouse is of more value than many children.

The curious inconsistency about this frame of mind is that most of the witnesses admitted that they were not vegetarians, and some of them realised that painful mutilations are carried out without anæsthetics on tens of thousands of animals every year merely in order to make their flesh pleasanter to eat. Some who enjoy so-called "blood sports" are ardent anti-vivisectionists. It is only when animals are used for the advance of knowledge and the relief of suffering in men and beasts that their opposition is aroused, and since the verdict of the Royal Commission against them in 1912 their leading societies have received approximately £600,000, largely used to agitate against hospitals, not only those for human beings but also those for animals. They attacked the Principal of the Royal Veterinary College, whose only animal experiments were devised to find a safe anæsthetic for his dog-patients. Meanwhile their own Anti-Vivisection Hospital was allowed to languish for lack of funds and has now ceased to follow their tenets, although no more striking proof of the soundness of them could be imagined than a really successful hospital which owed nothing in its treatment to animal experiment. This presumably they realised was impossible.

To bolster up their case they assert that animal experiments are (1) cruel, (2) useless. To prove the first they affect to believe that all the stringent safeguards of the law are simply a dead letter, in spite of the unanimous findings of the Commission to the contrary, and they maintain that feeding animals on special diets are painful "vivisections." The term itself is of course a misnomer, and employed to prejudice all forms of animal experiment. To prove the second one would imagine was difficult in view of the triumphs of antiseptics, antitoxins, endocrine therapy and many other discoveries which have relieved the sufferings of both man and beast. Their attitude towards insulin is typical. Diabetes is increasing, so that the total number of deaths attributed to it is not diminishing, which is used as an argument for the failure of insulin. What their journals do not tell their readers is that whereas formerly no child contracting diabetes under the age of 10 was alive two years later, now quite a number of those treated when it was first introduced in 1922-23 are still alive and well. They do not point out that at whatever age death occurs, and from whatever cause, diabetes will appear on the certificate as contributory. This accounts for the increased number of deaths certified from diabetes over the age of 75, while the deaths in earlier years have markedly diminished. In other walks of life suppression of facts such as these would be regarded as disingenuous, to say the least of it.

But it is unnecessary to labour these points any further. The purpose of this review is to call attention to Sir Leonard Rogers' very valuable and convincing statement of the whole case in this book before us. Sir Leonard, whose own unremitting labours for the relief of suffering have been crowned by discoveries of prime importance, is the Treasurer of the Research Defence Society founded by the late Mr. Stephen Paget, who followed the military maxim that the best defence is attack. The attack is brilliantly continued in this book which not only constitutes a battery of arguments, but unmasks the untenable position of his adversaries. Anyone reading it, however, will realise that if the case for anti-vivisection were based on reasonable grounds it would have been settled long ago. We can only conclude with Sir Arthur Keith "that the opposition to vivisection is not an isolated manifesta-

tion, but is part of a great modern issue. . . . We have to recognise that a great many men and women are not open to reason; they deliberately prefer to be guided by their feelings towards an impracticable ideal."

THE ADRENAL CORTEX AND INTERSEXUALITY.

By L. R. BROSTER, CLIFFORD ALLEN, H. W. C. VINES, JOSELYN PATTERSON, ALLAN W. GREENWOOD, G. F. MARRIAN and G. C. BUTLER. London. Chapman & Hall Ltd., 11, Henrietta Street, W.C.2. 1938. Price 15s.

The book is of considerable importance, and should be read by everyone interested in endocrinology. It is divided into four sections. The first, by Broster, deals with the clinical aspects, and the technique of unilateral adrenalectomy in cases of virilism associated with adrenal hyperplasia. Although a preliminary abdominal laparotomy is advocated to explore the adrenals, we learn in the subsequent pathological section that the weights of the removed adrenal glands were often within normal limits, and sometimes even small. In some thirty odd cases, there was one death from preliminary laparotomy, and one following adrenalectomy. The first section is of value chiefly on account of the excellent clinical material, but one is not certain that the evidence, as presented, proves the justification for the operation. The matter is so important that one would welcome a critical review of the cases subsequent to the operation, especially as non-surgical therapy has little to offer.

The second section deals with the psychological aspects, and is more interesting as a general treatise than as throwing much light on the adreno-genital syndrome. The author, Clifford Allen, wisely includes cases, free from gross endocrine abnormalities, in which psychological treatment alone has produced a reversion from homosexuality to normality.

The third section, by Vines, describes the affinity of the adrenal glands, removed from virile women, for the Ponceau-Fuchsin stain.